

PROCEEDINGS  
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NOTES ON THE RACES OF *RHEA AMERICANA*  
(LINNAEUS).

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Dearth of museum material has always hampered study of the struthious birds. The subspecific status of the rheas of Paraguay remained undetermined until last year when the University of Michigan received a series of an unrecognized race from the Chaco. Recently we have received four additional skins from eastern Paraguay, which prove to belong to a second unrecognized form.

The large rivers of South America seem to be impassable faunal barriers for these flightless birds, for it appears that the Pilcomayo, the Pařaguay, and the Parana, at least, form boundaries of the ranges of different races. Subspecific variation follows certain geographic trends. Size tends to increase southward and color to deepen. The largest form of all occurs in the Chaco, but in apparent response to climatic conditions its color has turned pale, instead of darkening.

A summary of the characters and ranges of the known subspecies follows.

*Rhea americana americana* (Linnaeus).

*Struthio americanus* Linnaeus, Syst. Nat., ed. 10, 1758 : 155. Pernambuco, Brazil, ex Marcgrave.

*Characters*.—Size small (tarsus 305 mm.); interscapular region dark brown; neck dull white.

*Range*.—Northeastern Brazil: Maranho to northern Bahia.

*Rhea americana intermedia* Rothschild and Chubb.

*Rhea americana intermedia* Rothschild and Chubb, Nov. Zool., 21, 1914: 223. Barra San Juan, Colonia, Uruguay.

*Characters.*—Size small (tarsus 300–307 mm.); interscapular region ash gray; neck buffy white.

*Range.*—Southern Brazil and Uruguay.

*Rhea americana nobilis*, subsp. nov.

*Type.*—Univ. Mich. Mus. Zool., No. 100,001; male adult; 40 kilometers west-southwest of Capitán Bado, east Paraguay; November 16, 1938; A. Schulze, original No. 7266.

*Characters.*—Size large (tarsus 342–366 mm.); interscapular region dark brown; lower half of neck jet black, upper half orange-cinnamon; flanks vinaceous cinnamon to pinkish buff.

*Range.*—Paraguay, east of the Rio Paraguay (Capitán Bado, Horqueta, Rosario). The specimen from near Rosario is an immature bird and is referred to this race on geographical grounds.

*Rhea americana albescens* Arribalzaga and Holmberg.

*Rhea albescens* Arribalzaga and Holmberg, *Naturalista Argentina*, 1, 1878: 101. Carhue, Buenos Aires, Argentina; albino!

*Rhea rothschildi* Brabourne and Chubb, *Ann. & Mag. Nat. Hist.*, 8th ser., 8, 1911: 273. Los Yngleses, Ajó, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

*Characters.*—Size large (tarsus 330–337 mm.); interscapular region black; neck mostly black.

*Range.*—Plains of Argentina, south to Rio Negro.

*Rhea americana araneipes* Brodkorb.

*Rhea americana araneipes* Brodkorb, *Oec. Pap. Mus. Zool. Univ. Mich.*, No. 367, 1938 : 1. Kilometer 195, west of Puerto Casado, Paraguay.

*Characters.*—Largest (tarsus 351–370 mm.); interscapular region grayish brown; lower third of neck black, upper two-thirds pale buffy; flanks ashy gray.

*Range.*—Paraguayan Chaco. It is probably also this race which inhabits eastern Bolivia. The status of Matto Grosso birds is undetermined; they are probably either *araneipes* or *nobilis*, since the measurements published by Stone are large.